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Vocabulary Readers

China's

Amazing Buildings



by Leslie McClellan

Number of Words: 498

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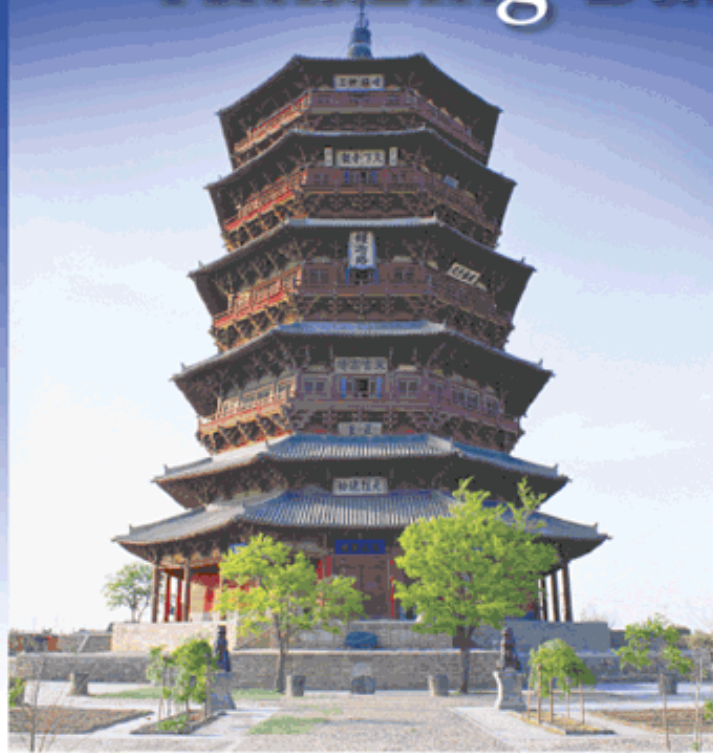
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Strategy Focus

As you read, pause at different parts of the selection to **summarize** what you have learned.



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

BOSTON

Key Vocabulary

craftsmen skilled workers

domain area ruled by a government

durable sturdy and long lasting

dynasty line of rulers from one family

excluding keeping someone or something out

extravagance wasteful spending

laborers workers

massive large and solid

nomadic moving from place to place

steppe vast, dry, grassy plain

terrain features of land

Word Teaser

Step carefully as you walk across the grassy _____.



Today, China's **terrain** is home to many skyscrapers and other modern buildings. But you can still find amazing examples of traditional Chinese architecture, or building design. In fact, China contains some of the world's oldest structures.

Shanghai, China



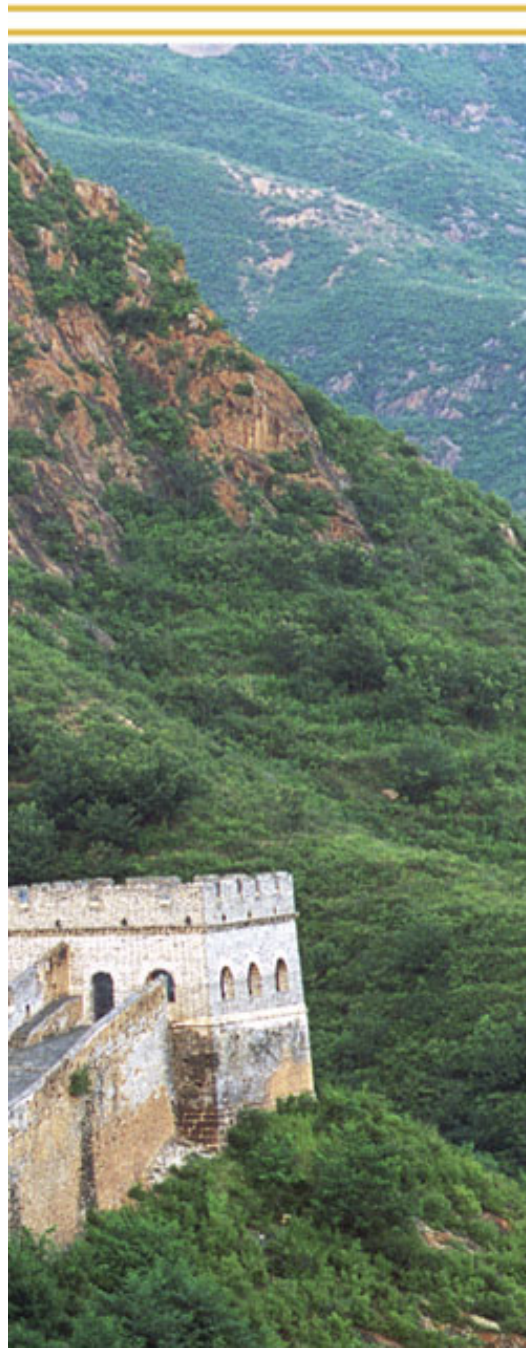
The Great Wall is one of the most famous Chinese structures. At more than 3,700 miles long, it is definitely the most **massive**, too!

The Chinese Emperor Qin Shi Huangdi (chin shir WHANG dee) ordered that the Great Wall be built over 2,000 years ago. At the time of his rule, many groups of fierce **nomadic** warriors lived on the Asian **steppes**, or grasslands. The emperor wanted to make sure these warriors did not enter his domain, or the area ruled by his government.



In 1368, emperors improved the Great Wall. They made it stronger and longer.

The emperor was a man who liked to show off his riches. He enjoyed every type of **extravagance**. The Great Wall was not his only big project. He also ordered workers to build him a giant burial place, or tomb. The emperor wanted the tomb to look like a great city.



One small part of Qin
Shi Huangdi's tomb

The ceiling of the burial room looks like a sky covered with jewels. Skilled **craftsmen** also made an army of clay soldiers to watch over the tomb. The army includes more than 7,000 life-size statues of warriors and horses.

Each of the statues has a different face. No two look alike.



A few hundred years after Qin Shi Huangdi died, a new religion called Buddhism (BOO-dizm) came to China. The Chinese made special buildings called pagodas (pu-GO-duz) to celebrate their new religion.

Chinese pagodas come in different shapes and sizes. Some have fancy decorations. Their roofs may contain jewels or carvings.



This wooden Buddhist pagoda is the oldest and tallest one in the world. It was built in 1056. It has nine floors and eight sides. It was built without a single nail! Yet it is very durable. It has even made it through many earthquakes. People study the pagoda to understand why it is so strong.



In China's capital city, there is a huge palace that once was home to China's emperors. It was named the Forbidden City because ordinary people were not allowed to enter.

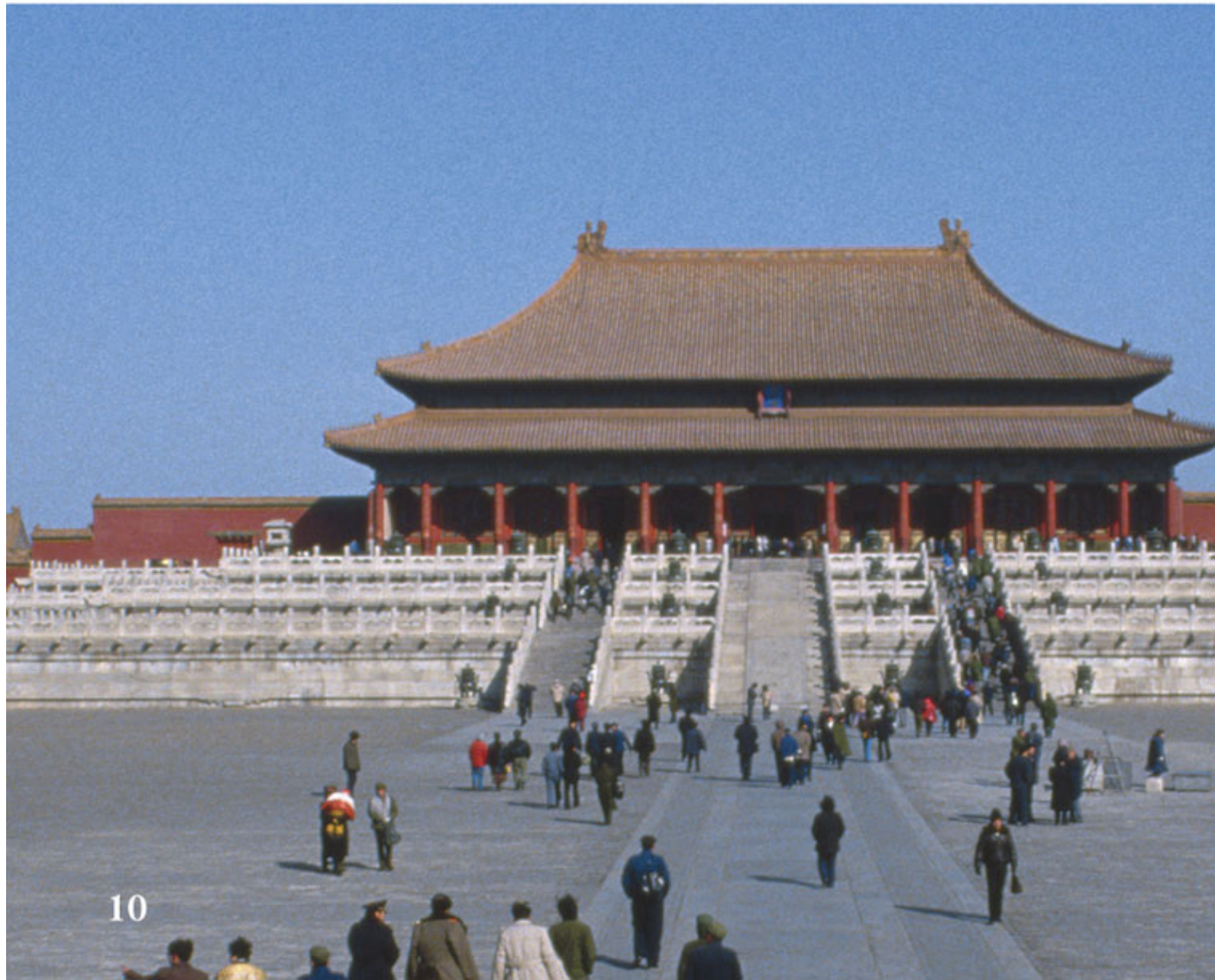
The Forbidden City is surrounded by a huge red wall. It was built for the purpose of **excluding** people from the palace. The palace has 9,999 rooms. One of its courtyards is big enough to hold a whole city of people!



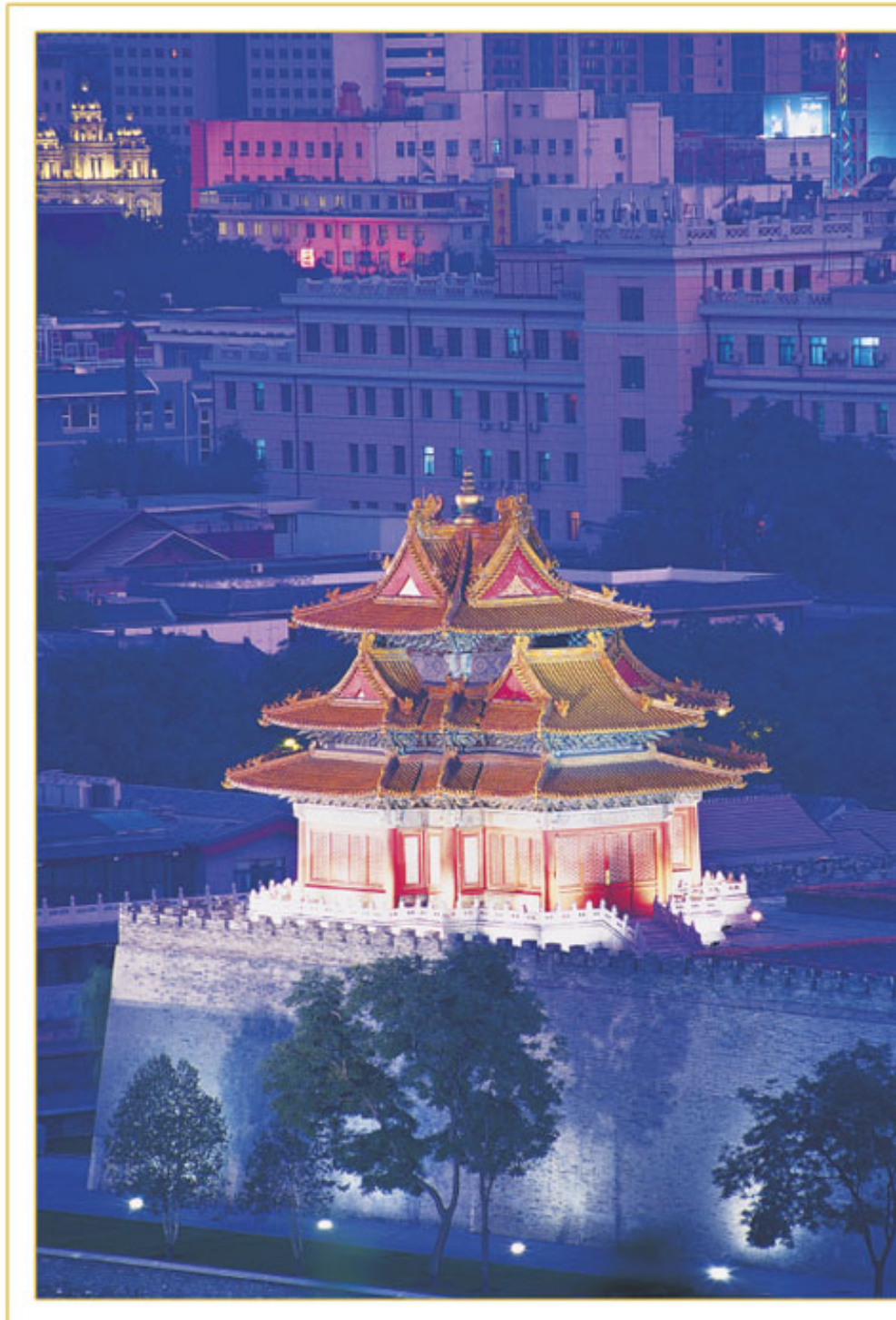
Workers began to build the Forbidden City around 1407, during the Ming **Dynasty**, or line of rulers. More than one million **laborers** and craftsmen worked on it.

The builders of the Forbidden City paid close attention to the colors they used. The city includes many great halls and palaces with bright red walls. In China, red stands for happiness, good luck, and riches.

The roofs of most buildings are made of yellow tile. Yellow stood for the great power of China's emperors.



Today China does not have an emperor, and the Forbidden City is a museum. Every year, thousands of people visit it. People also visit the tomb of the Emperor Qin and the country's many pagodas.



Responding

Putting Words to Work

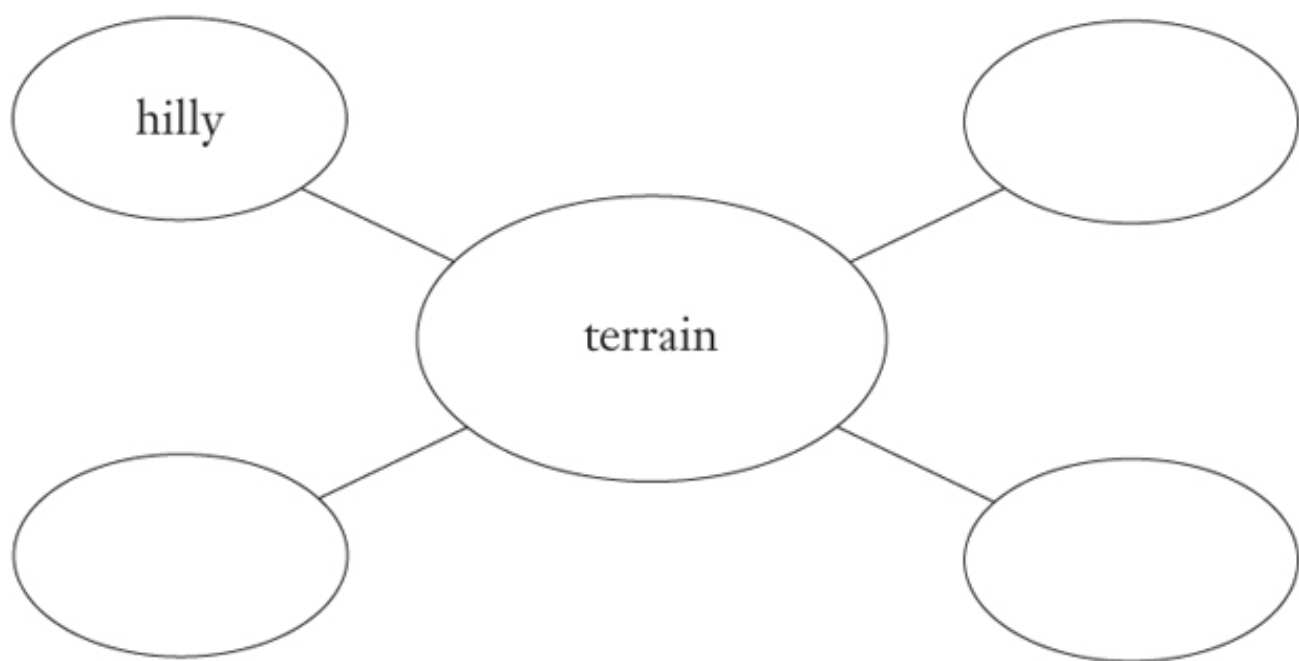
1. What did **craftsmen** and **laborers** do during the reign of Emperor Qin?
2. Could something that is **massive** also be **durable**?
3. Complete the following sentence:
The emperor's _____ and _____ were signs of his **extravagance**.
4. How did the threat of fierce **nomadic** warriors affect China during Shi Huangdi's rule?
5. **PARTNER ACTIVITY:** Think of a word you learned in the text. Explain its meaning to your partner and give an example.

Answer to Word Teaser

steppe

Word Builder

China is a country with many different kinds of **terrain**. Copy the word web and add kinds of terrain in the United States.



Write About It

Picture yourself on a dream vacation. Where are you? Write a paragraph that describes the land around you. Use the word **terrain** and at least one of the other words from your word web.

Key Vocabulary

craftsmen
domain
durable
dynasty
excluding
extravagance
laborers
massive
nomadic
steppe
terrain

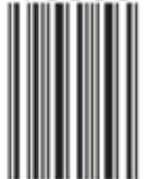
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